



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

have found numerous examples of this spelling with a *c*, and not a single instance to the contrary.

Sagart, then, we may be assured, comes from *sacerdos*; and that from *Sacer*, which is perhaps cognate with the Greek *hagios*, and the Sanskrit *Sac* *venerari*.

As for the Latin *Sagax*, I think there is good reason to suspect that this, as well as the Scandinavian *Saga* is connected with the Gothic *Sagan*; German, *Sagen*; English, *Say*; for as the Latin *presagio* means to foretell, we may presume that the real meaning of *Sagio* was to tell. So, in the old German, *forasako* meant foretelling or prophecy. Between the Latin *Sagax* and *Sacer* it is not likely that any relationship existed. The Hebrew *Sagad*, to which Mr. Windele refers, following the misleading guidance of Vallancey (*Collectanea* Vol. iv., p. 449), has nothing to say to any of these words. It does not mean to adore, but to fall down; and it is only when constructed with the preposition *le*, unto, that it admits of being so translated. To fall down unto idols is equivalent to adoring idols; though falling down is not identical with adoration.

The length to which these criticisms have extended may appear disproportioned to that of the sentence upon which they form a commentary. It must be remembered, however, that a short objection often demands a lengthened reply; and that the clearing away of difficulties or errors is generally more laborious than the statement of them.

I have little doubt but that Mr. Windele's candour will oblige him to abandon Mr. Horgan's reading and interpretation of the Burnfort inscription. Whether he will acquiesce in mine is another question. I fear his attachment to his theory will still lead him to adopt any conclusion rather than the natural one, viz., that the nine letters, S A G I T T A R I, constitute the Latin name *Sagittari*.

ON THE AGE OF OGHAM WRITING.

No. II.

BY JOHN WINDELE, ESQ.

[*Read at the Meeting of July 9th.*]

It is with much reluctance that I find myself compelled to offer a few observations on a paper from the Rev. Dr. Graves, relative to the Burnfort inscription, read at the last meeting of your Society. But were I to permit it to pass without notice, my silence might, doubtless, be construed into an admission of error which I am, in this case, but little disposed to make.

Premising that I do not feel myself in any way answerable for the

interpretation given by the late Mr. Horgan to the inscription in question, and that I do not consider myself called upon for any vindication of the opinions which I have formed on the origin or era of Ogham writing, I mean merely to confine myself to Dr. Graves's criticism upon Mr. Horgan's translation, which appears to me to be singularly unsound.

It will be borne in mind that of the nine letters composing the Burnfort inscription, Mr. Horgan had formed the words "Sagi Dari," whilst Dr. Graves had combined the same characters into the single Latinized name *Sagittari*, which he found to correspond with that of a French bishop, living in the sixth century, according to Gregory of Tours. In his criticism upon the Horgan reading, the Doctor says but little in support of his own interpretation; merely contenting himself in assailing that of Mr. Horgan, and with a passing fling at my hypothesis. No doubt, as he says, it would be very embarrassing to my theory to admit that the stone bears a *Latin* inscription, but before I can do so, we must have some other proof than a fanciful resemblance—some better authority to show that the name *Sagittarius* was Irish, than the mere information that a Bishop of that name once lived in France, which would be just as pertinent as to tell us that a constellation in the heavens was so called. On the contrary, no such difficulty can be found in Mr. Horgan's reading. The name he produces—the two words he forms, are unassailably Irish; the name *Daire* is one well known and vernacular, in no wise depending on French history, a foreign language, or on astronomy for proof or analogies.

But Dr. Graves with an infelicitous oblivion of Irish grammar, objects to Mr. Horgan's substituting a *d* for the two *t*'s forming the word *Dari*. He surely ought to have known, as every Irish scholar does, that two *t*'s are almost invariably read as *d*. Let him consult any Irish grammar or dictionary, and he will at a glance be satisfied of this. I shall offer a few examples.

In the MS. Grammars of *Teig Og*, son of *Teig dall O'Higgin*, and *Giolla Brighite O'Heoghusa*, the rule is laid down distinctly. The latter says, under the head of "combination of consonants," "*tt, d, do nithear diobh*"—i.e. where two *t*'s occur, they are sounded *d*.

"When *tt* are thus written in the beginning of a word, they both pronounce as *d*; but the last *t* maintains the signification, as 'ar *ttaobh*, our side.'" (H. M'Curtin's *Elements of the Irish Language*, Lovain, 1728, p. 17).

"In ancient Irish MSS., consonants of the same organ, particularly *b* and *p*, *c* and *g*, *d* and *t*, are very frequently substituted for each other; and where the ancients usually wrote *p*, *c*, *t*, the moderns write *b*, *g*, *d*" (O'Donovan's *Irish Grammar*, p. 3., see also *Monck Mason's Irish Grammar*, p. 11.; *O'Daly's Self Instructor*, p. 18, &c).

Dr. O'Brien, (*Irish-English Dictionary*), and, after him, O'Reilly, say—"The letter *t* is naturally commutable with *d*, both being letters of the same organ, and accordingly in our old MSS. we find them in-

differently written, the one for the other, in the middle and ending of words, but seldom or never as initials" (*Remarks on the letter T*). But from the concluding part of this observation of our lexicographers, we are enabled to dissent, as I can show an abundance of instances where the double *t* is used initially for *d*, as well as in the middle and in the termination of words, as in :—

Truagh liom oidhe na ttri tttruagh
Sad to me is the catastrophe of the three sorrows.

Trans. Gael. Soc. Dub., p. 13.

Is edh faith fa ttugas fuaith
This is the cause why I have hated. *Ib.* 200.

Tiobrattaibh Briotain buain
The wells of long-lived Britain.

Circuit of Ireland, p. 40.

Darmaitt Ua Ceallaigh, i.e. Darmaid O'Kelly.
Petrie's Round Towers, p. 241.

The Bards never lost sight of this. Blind Courtney, or rather the celebrated Patrick Lindon, of the Fews of Armagh, has preserved it, in his beautiful address to the Castle of Glasdromin. Speaking of the connexion of the family of O'Donnell with that of the great O'Neill, he writes *O'TTongaile* for *O'Donngaile*. Another Irish scholar, the accurate Patrick O'Pronty, in his welcome to the most Rev. Brian MacMahon, Primate of all Ireland, and his brother the Bishop of Clogher writes—*TTiaghaire tttearsnaoi ttana ttur*, for *Diadhaire dearsnaoi dana dur*.

It is, I am sure, needless to multiply further instances on this head, and yet I can hardly help adding a reference, somewhat in point, to an old inscription on a stone at Kilnasagart, near Jonesborough (Armagh), which contains these double letters in *TTan* and *TTer*, and are evidently *T* doubled for *D*, though initials.

Dr. Graves altogether denies that we possess any such word in the Irish language as *Sagi*, cognate with sage, and meaning wise, wizard, priest, or anything of the kind, and this he does, as he tells us, "not hastily, but after a careful review of the Scotch, Welsh, and Breton languages, as well as of the Irish." Here has been a waste of research, which could have been avoided by a simple reference to O'Reilly's Dictionary, where the kindred words *Sacc* and *Saoi* signifying sacred, holy, wise, learned, may be readily found. And although I admit that *Saoid*, another form of these words, at present has no *g* in it, I would protest against its being hastily concluded that it never had, inasmuch as even *d* has been sometimes substituted for *g*. We often find *gh* used convertibly for *dh*, and I have shown an example of this in the line above extracted from O'Pronty's poem. But as in the case of the *tt*, the Doctor may object to the *cc* in *Sacc* being read as *g*, I must again refer to our grammars and old literature, in which it will be found that the double letters *cc* are read as *g* in the beginning, middle, and ending of words. See also O'Brien and O'Reilly's remarks on the letter *G*. "In old parchments," say they, "*cc* and *g*

are written indifferently for each other." Thus we have *Patruicc* for *Padruig*, *Mocholmocc* for *Mocholmog*, *Flannacean* for *Flanagan*, *Damliacc* for *Damliag*, &c.

If we had not this word in its forms of *Sag*, *Sagi*, *Saoi*, and *Saoiadh*, I admit its rejection from the inscription would have been justified, or, on the other hand, had O'Reilly omitted those he has given, as he has many thousands of others, from his dictionary, it would have been, for a time at least, unfortunate for Mr. Horgan's reputation as an Irish scholar; as in that case, notwithstanding the evidence of many living "Irishians," besides that of the depreciated Vallancey, those words might still have been treated as remnants of the unknown tongue. One gentleman, a first rate proficient in Irish scholarship, writing to me on this subject says—"The word *Saige* is our *Saidhe*, a sage, formed by the non-observance of the modern rule of *Caol le Caol*, &c., and the *g* and *d* and *i* and *e* being always commutable. There are the words *Sacair* (*quasi sacc-fhear*, a holy man), a priest, and *Sacar buigh* (*sacc-fhear-buidhe*) a sacrifice, from the same root."

"But," continues Dr. Graves, "even if there had existed such a word as *Sagi*, with the supposed meaning, it would have been written after, and not before, the proper name, when employed as a title. We always find *Flann file*, *Cormacan eigeas*, *Goban saer*, &c." These however are rather exceptional cases. Cuan O'Lochain, as quoted in Petrie's "Tara," p. 148, furnishes a ready instance in support of Mr. Horgan's reading, in the lines:—

Sai Bruccaid beirdis dlicciud.
The Sage Brugaid who distributed law.

And I must again beg to refer Dr. Graves to our Grammars on this point. See especially that of Professor O'Donovan, p. 365, for the following rule—"When two or more substantives come together, or succeed each other, denoting the same object, they should agree in case by apposition." And even the adjective—which *sagi* is not—does not always follow the substantive; thus we have in compound words, *deagh dhuine*, a good man; *dubh abhain*, a black river; *og bhean*, a young woman; *gnath bhearla*, a common dialect; *uasal ceand*, a noble head, &c.

"Again," he says, "*Sagi* is not the root of the Irish word *Sagart*, a priest; *Sagart*, like the Anglo-Saxon *Sacerd*, is derived from the Latin *Sacerdos*," and he adduces numerous instances to prove that the word *Sagart* was anciently spelled *Sacart*. I freely admit his latter position, and that it was even spelled with the double *c*, as in *Saccairt* (see Reeves' *Eccl. Antiq. of Down*, p. 142, especially), yet what does all this prove but that the word was still *Sagart*; those *c*'s, either single or double, being used convertibly for *g*, as in *sai Bruccaid*, just quoted. The denial that *Sagi* is not the root of *Sagart* or cognate with the Latin *Sagax*, or the Hebrew *Sagad*, which "admits of being translated to *adore*," being founded on his assurance that no

such word belongs to the Irish language, is of course met by my reference to it in its place in O'Reilly's Dictionary.

When Dr. Graves admits that the Latin *Sagax* is connected with the Scandinavian *Saga*, he forgets that *Saga* itself has been claimed as a derivative from Ireland.—See *O'Conor's Rerum Hib. Script.* 1, 25.

One word as to the translation of Ogham inscriptions. I have been long convinced that it requires a profound knowledge of the ancient Irish to grapple with the great and varied difficulties that beset this subject. We have, in the first instance, to deal with a language which has been obsolete for many centuries; whose unsettled orthography totally differs from that of our more modern literature, and I think it highly probable that many words will be found represented merely by initial letters. "The Irish, like the Chinese, had several characters representing entire words."—(The late J. F. O'Flaherty in *Trans. R.I. Acad.* vol. xiv. p. 113); and Sir W. Betham to some extent illustrates this in the first volume of the *Etruria Celtica*, p. 65, et seq.

The Burnfort inscription affords a striking evidence of these difficulties by the variety and discordance of the attempts made to decipher it. I have now before me *six* of these experiments.

First, that of the Rev. Mr. Horgan :—

"*Sagi Dari*, i.e., the Sage Darius."

Secondly, Sir William Betham :—

"*Saget Tare*, i.e., the arrow of evil."

Thirdly, Edmond Mahony, an Irish scribe, who reads it by a scale called the *Ogham Cinn air iomal*, viz :—

"*Lica Dima*, i.e., the monument of Dima.
See *Colgan's A. SS.* 145.

Fourthly, Mr. Denis O'Flynn :—

"*Sa gad ta righ*, i.e., in this bed or hollow lies the king."

Fifthly, Dr. Wood, author of the "Inquiry into the Origin of the Primitive Inhabitants of Ireland" :—

"*Sagitta ri*, i.e., the king's arrow."

The first word being Latin, the second Irish.

Sixthly, Dr. Graves :—

"*Sagittari*, i.e., the grave of Sagittarius,"

whose namesake lived in France, or, as I would suggest, is one of the corporation of the zodiac. Seriously speaking, my "candour" will not permit me to say that my objection to the Doctor's reading has been in the slightest degree shaken by his criticisms.